

## Guidance for Primary Call Applicants

### – Meeting the Research Quality and Research Benefit criteria for your chosen Stream

January 2024

This document will assist you in developing responses to questions relating to Research Quality and Research Benefit that align with your chosen Stream.

Also included is the guidance that reviewers will use to assess your submission for a grant of fully funded sea time on CSIRO research vessel (RV) *Investigator*.

To submit your best application, you should also be familiar with the requirements for each of the [Streams of Access](#) and the [Operations Rolling Plan](#) before starting.

**More information is available from the Marine Facilities Planning (MFP) home menu *Help & Documentation* tab:**

- MFP Help & Documentation – Primary Applications
- How to - upload supporting documents for your application
- CV Template

### **Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Country**

The CSIRO Marine National Facility (MNF) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and seas that we live and work on across Australia and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We honour and celebrate the spiritual, cultural and customary connections of Traditional Owners to Country and its surrounding seas and oceans.

## Merit Principle: Research Quality

Fully funded access to RV *Investigator* is expensive and limited, and demand exceeds availability. Consequently, supported research must have a robust disciplinary rationale, clear and appropriate objectives, sound methods, demonstrable feasibility, the prospect of informative results, and be conducted by people with appropriate expertise.

The merit principle “Research Quality” will be independently assessed by expert external reviewers and the Research Advisory Committee (RAC). RAC membership is comprised of marine research experts from diverse backgrounds. For further information about the RAC’s role, membership, and Terms of Reference visit [Research Advisory Committee - CSIRO](#)

**Important:** Questions relating to *Research Quality* will be assessed by RAC who will **not see** your responses to questions relating to *Research Benefit*. You must not rely on information contained in your *Research Benefit* responses to supplement responses to *Research Quality* questions.

Similarly, documents uploaded to *Research Quality* folders will not be visible to reviewers of *Research Benefit*. Tips on uploading documents can be found on the MFP home screen *Help & Documentation* tab.

Research Quality and Research Benefit questions are weighted equally.

Stream Advice for Applicants	Criteria, Questions and Guidance for Applicants	Assessment and Scoring Guidance 0 Unsupportable; 1 Poor; 2-3 Adequate-Good; 4 Strong; 5 Compelling
<b>RQ 1. Research Objectives and Rationale</b>		
<p><b>Stream 1. Policy-driven research</b></p> <p>Your research should be justified in the context of what it will deliver against your chosen government policy-driven priority, with particular reference to how particular objectives will deliver research or data of relevance to the end-user policy domain. Stream 1 requires more than end-user support and aims to deliver research that has been co-conceived/co-designed to ensure end user objectives will be met.</p> <p><b>Stream 2. Discipline-driven research</b></p> <p>Your research should be justified in the context of disciplinary or multi-disciplinary knowledge and theory, with particular reference to current research questions of recognised importance to the relevant discipline(s). You should articulate how your research will contribute significantly to advancing knowledge in the field or test specific hypotheses to advance theory. Stream 2 applications are encouraged to evidence how the research will be useful to end-users.</p> <p>End-users of Stream 2 research might include other researchers who will apply your results to national or international research initiatives, such as improving models of climate, the ocean, biodiversity or contributing to global research activities.</p> <p>Research objectives should clearly address the key disciplinary questions or knowledge gaps you have articulated.</p> <p><b>Stream 3. Strategic partnerships</b></p> <p>Stream 3 will support publicly funded national programs that rely on regular and repeated access to MNF capabilities to support data and sample collection and for which deployment of a national research facility is appropriate. It is expected that Stream 3 research will involve recurrent deployments over multiple years through formal partnership arrangements between the MNF and other publicly funded programs. It is highly recommended that the proposed partner be an active part of the application process.</p> <p>To become a prospective partner, you should discuss your research requirements with the MNF at an early stage and ahead of submitting an application, to verify both the degree of reliance by the program on MNF capabilities and that the research is appropriate for a partnership arrangement with the MNF. Stream 3 partnership agreements will be reviewed against delivered benefits and merit criteria.</p> <p><b>Stream 4. Technology and innovation</b></p> <p>Research objectives should articulate clearly the key technological questions that need to be addressed. You should describe the stage of the technology, its ultimate end use (such as commercialisation or other end use) and how access to RV <i>Investigator</i> is essential for advancing the technology towards that goal.</p> <p><b>Streams 1-4</b></p> <p>The need for research over multiple years should be justified if multiple voyages are being sought, including recovery of deployed equipment.</p> <p><b>Stream 5. User-funded research</b></p> <p>If you are interested in accessing sea time under Stream 5, please reach out to <a href="mailto:MNf@csiro.au">MNf@csiro.au</a> before applying.</p>	<p><b>RQ 1 Research Objectives and Rationale</b></p> <p><b>Explain the scientific objectives and reasons for doing this research.</b></p> <p>In answering this question, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the overall research objectives (what your research is trying to achieve, what questions your research is trying to answer).</li> <li>• Explain the scientific rationale for doing this research, including background and field-specific context (why the research is important, and context).</li> <li>• Where appropriate, include Stream specific aspects which motivate your research, including Australian and international partnerships and consultation, and how your project aligns with the chosen Stream.</li> </ul>	<p><b>RQ 1: Research Objectives and Rationale</b></p> <p><b>Has the case been made for why the research should be conducted – not just what research is being proposed, but why it is important to do it, and to do it now, and to do it now. What is the value of this research to scientific advancement in general?</b></p> <p><b>Unsupportable:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research objectives and rationale obscure and link to Stream strategy not established.</li> </ul> <p><b>Poor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research objectives and rationale poorly described and link to Stream strategy weakly or vaguely argued.</li> </ul> <p><b>Adequate-Good:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research objectives and rationale reasonably clearly articulated with moderate justification and link to Stream strategy clear.</li> </ul> <p><b>Strong:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research objectives and rationale well argued with strong justification of research contribution to discipline(s) and importance to Stream strategy well-argued.</li> </ul> <p><b>Compelling:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research objectives and rationale is compelling, clear, convincing and essential to the Stream strategy.</li> </ul>

## RQ 2. Research Design and Methodology

### Stream 1. Policy-driven research

### Stream 2. Discipline-driven research, and

### Stream 3. Strategic partnerships

You should clearly explain the design (sampling, experimental, analytical) of your research and the methods you will use to gather and analyse your data.

Research methods are expected to be consistent with current best-practice.

### Stream 4. Technology and innovation

You should clearly explain the design of your technology or innovation and the methods planned to gather data sufficiently clearly for a reviewer to be able to assess the value of supporting your application.

### Stream 5. User-funded research

If you are interested in accessing sea time under Stream 5, please reach out to [MNf@csiro.au](mailto:MNf@csiro.au) before applying.

### RQ 2 Research Design and Methodology

**Describe your research approach, including when and where you will take samples or conduct experiments, why that is sufficient to meet your research objectives and how that aligns with your voyage plan.**

Note: Ensure information here aligns with information provided in the Logistics Section of this Application Form.

In answering this question, you must also:

- Describe your methods, and subsequent analysis of your data, and why they are appropriate for the research objectives.
- Demonstrate how the design of the proposed research is consistent with current best practice, robust and appropriate and sufficient to meet the project objectives.
- Clearly indicate if any of the methods proposed are developmental or innovative and describe how potential risks of using such cutting-edge methods will be mitigated.
- Distinguish between pre-voyage, at-sea and post-voyage activities (preparation for sampling, sample collection, sample and data analysis etc.) as appropriate.

### RQ 2: Research Design and Methodology

**Is the design of the research, including design of sampling or experimental programmes and proposed analyses, robust? Is it sufficient to meet project objectives? Are the methods, whether well-established or innovative, clearly explained, fit-for-purpose, and appropriate for the objectives of the work?**

#### Unsupportable:

- Research design and methodology not articulated, fundamentally flawed. Inappropriate to meet project objectives.

#### Poor:

- Research design and methodology poorly explained, potentially flawed. Unlikely to meet project objectives.

#### Adequate-Good:

- Research design and methodology outlined and apparently sound, but with some gaps. Likely to meet project objectives.

#### Strong:

- Research design and methodology clear and inferentially robust. Strong likelihood of meeting project objectives.

#### Compelling:

- Research design and methodology state-of-the art, best practice, innovative or cutting edge, and inferentially difficult to fault, thoroughly explained and clearly best-practice. Strong alignment between research approach and articulated objectives. Highly likely to meet project objectives.

## RQ 3. People

**Streams 1-4**

You should demonstrate that the research team has the essential capability, experience and track record to complete the proposed work, both during and following the voyage, and includes appropriate leadership on land and at sea to deliver results to the relevant policy domain end-user.

Applications that include a mix of early career and experienced researchers will be viewed favourably, especially those with clear plans for mentoring early career researchers in sea-going research leadership.

Voyage leadership need not be by established researchers, but you should demonstrate that you will have sufficient support on-board to mentor a first-time leader.

Note: Short form CV's are welcome to provide more detail on the Investigators, but do not only rely on attached CVs to answer the question. Reviewers should be able to also assess the quality of the team based on answers provided in the text box. Uploaded CVs should use the template available from the *Help & Documentation* area in the main menu. Maximum length for any attached CVs is three pages.

**Stream 5. User-funded research**

If you are interested in accessing sea time under Stream 5, please reach out to [MNF@csiro.au](mailto:MNF@csiro.au) before applying.

**RQ 3 People**

**Describe the team engaged in the project, including their capabilities, leadership, and suitability for conducting ship-based research, as well as who you will involve and mentor.**

Note: Ensure answers focus on capability relating to research quality. Capability in delivering impact is addressed under RB4 Impact.

Note: CVs are supportive only and shouldn't be used as your explanation of the team's suitability.

In answering this question, you must also:

- Describe the team engaged in the project, their capabilities to conduct the research, the leadership of the team and their suitability for conducting ship-based research on RV *Investigator*.
- Describe how you will involve and mentor students and ECRs and other participants who will contribute to the voyage and project.
- Using the template provided, upload to the documents area an up-to-date CV for the voyage leader and PIs and if possible, for team members. The preferred CV template can be found under the Home screen *Help & Documentation* tab.

**RQ 3: Does the research team have the essential capabilities, leadership, and suitability to complete the proposed work, both during and following a voyage? Does the research team include sufficient research leadership to involve and mentor students and ECRs and other participants who will contribute to the voyage and project?**

**Unsupportable:**

- Project team is partly secured, with a weak record of research ability and there are significant gaps in their expertise with respect to the research objectives. Project team has no people with previous voyage experience and does not explain who will provide overall project leadership.

**Poor:**

- Project team has a weak record of research ability and there are major gaps in their expertise with respect to the research objectives. Project team has few or no people with demonstrated voyage leadership experience (though perhaps with voyage experience) or unclear explanation of overall project leadership to deliver promised outputs, or both.

**Adequate–Good:**

- Project team has good depth of research ability and their national and/or internationally recognised expertise mostly covers the research objectives of the project. Project team has at least one person with previous voyage leadership experience (who will be on the voyage) and apparent overall project leadership to deliver promised outputs.

**Strong:**

- Project team has a very strong record of research ability and their nationally and/or internationally recognised expertise mostly covers the research objectives of the project. Project team has strong demonstrated voyage leadership experience that will be on the voyage and clear project leadership for delivery of promised outputs.

**Compelling:**

- Project team has an outstanding record of research ability and their nationally and internationally recognised expertise can be directly mapped to the research objectives of the project. Project team has compelling plan for voyage leadership, including mentoring new or future voyage leaders, and clearly articulated project leadership plan that will ensure timely delivery of promised outputs.

## RQ 4. Post-voyage Activities and Impact

### Stream 1. Policy-driven research and Stream 2. Discipline-driven research

You should demonstrate that you have both a credible and efficient preliminary voyage plan that justifies the use of the resources involved, and a realistic and appropriate plan for delivering the proposed results post-voyage.

Ensure you provide a strong indication about what you are going to do post-voyage. Be clear on the pathway for ongoing collaboration, not just on the voyage but in the post-voyage analysis and research outcomes as well. Is there a wrap up/evaluation element (to consider what worked, or could work better)? How will the data and post-voyage analysis be handled? What will be the outputs?

You should demonstrate co-design with next- and end-users as appropriate. In particular for Stream 1 applicants – you should demonstrate that you have engaged with the relevant MNF policy-driven priority end-user to co-design the project for the best possible chance of successful policy-relevant outcomes.

### Stream 3. Strategic partnerships

Applicants should demonstrate that they have both a credible and efficient preliminary voyage/partnership plan that justifies the use of the resources involved, and a realistic and appropriate plan for delivering the proposed results post- voyage/partnership.

Ensure you provide a strong indication about what you are going to do post-voyage. Be clear on the pathway for ongoing collaboration, not just on the voyage but in the post-voyage analysis and research outcomes as well. Is there a theory of change that demonstrates a pathway to impact? Is there a wrap up/evaluation element (to consider what worked, or could work better)? How will the data and post-voyage analysis be handled? What will be the outputs?

### Stream 4. Technology and innovation

You should demonstrate that you have both a credible and efficient preliminary voyage plan that justifies the use of the resources involved, and a realistic and appropriate plan for delivering the proposed results post-voyage.

Ensure you provide a strong indication about what you are going to do post-voyage and how you envision the future of the technology. Is there a theory of change that demonstrates a pathway to impact? Is there a wrap up/evaluation element (to consider what worked, or could work better)? How will the data and post-voyage analysis be handled? What will be the outputs?

### Stream 5. User-funded research

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### RQ 4 Post-voyage Activities and Impact

**Outline your post-voyage plan of work, including lab-work, data/sample processing and management, and the research outputs that will result from your analyses.**

In answering this question, you must also:

- Describe the institutional support and funding to support the post-voyage plan.
- Describe the expected impact of your work in the context of the chosen Stream, including science and training impact and impact on the broader community.

**RQ 4: Is the post-voyage plan of work, including lab-work, data/sample processing and management, research outputs and expected impact, well-planned, efficient, and feasible with the available facilities, funding, and requested sea-time?**

#### Unsupportable:

- The post-voyage activities and impact plans are insufficient, very unclear, not linked to project objectives, or not feasible.

#### Poor:

- The post-voyage activities and impact plans are potentially insufficient, unclear, need refinement or clarity and appear either inappropriate or excessive, or are poorly linked to objectives.

#### Adequate–Good:

- The post-voyage activities and impact plans are sufficient and reasonable but with some limitations, clear but somewhat vague about how they will meet project objectives or have some uncertainty about delivery within project timeline.

#### Strong:

- The post-voyage activities and impact plans are adequate, well justified, realistic, efficient, clearly articulated, linked very well to project objectives, and expected to be deliverable within project timeline.

#### Compelling:

- The post-voyage activities and impact plans are realistic, very thorough, well justified, and appropriate for the project considering contingencies, excellently detailed with compelling a case they will meet project objectives and be delivered within project timeline.

## Merit Principle: Research Benefit

Fully funded access to RV *Investigator* is expensive and limited, and demand consistently exceeds availability. Consequently, supported research must align with national interests, be likely to deliver upon national needs, have a path to impact and the right team to deliver benefit to justify investment of MNF resources.

The merit principle “Research Benefit” will be independently assessed by the National Benefit Advisory Committee (NBAC). NBAC membership is comprised of user groups including government, industry, and research institutes from diverse backgrounds. For further information about the NBAC’s role, membership, and Terms of Reference visit [National Benefit Advisory Committee - CSIRO](#)

**Important:** Questions relating to *Research Benefit* will be assessed by NBAC who will **not see** your responses relating to *Research Quality*. You must not rely on information contained in your *Research Quality* responses to supplement responses to *Research Benefit* questions.

Similarly, documents uploaded to *Research Benefit* folders will not be visible to reviewers of *Research Quality*. Tips on uploading documents can be found on the MFP home screen *Help & Documentation* tab.

Research Benefit and Research Quality questions are weighted equally.

Stream Advice for Applicants	Criteria, Questions and Guidance for Applicants	Assessment and Scoring Guidance 0 Unsupportable; 1 Poor; 2-3 Adequate-Good; 4 Strong; 5 Compelling
<b>RB 1. National Interest and User Needs</b>		
<p><b>Stream 1. Policy-driven research</b></p> <p>You should clearly establish that the research proposed directly addresses key questions or needs stated for your identified <u>policy-driven priority</u> for the current allocation round.</p> <p>Ensure that you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate a clear link between your proposed research and one or more of your nominated end- users needs.</li> <li>• Provide clear, realistic (not aspirational) and appropriate objectives that will deliver research of benefit to your nominated end-user(s).</li> </ul> <p><b>Stream 2. Discipline-driven research</b></p> <p>You should clearly identify the Australian interest(s) that stand to benefit from the new knowledge delivered and who will be the recipient(s) of these outputs that will deliver that new knowledge.</p> <p>Explain why the research proposed is relevant to Australia's national policy, industry or public interests, or international standing, such that reviewers can see that the research will fill important information gaps in the relevant area(s).</p> <p>You must also provide clear, realistic (not aspirational) and appropriate objectives that will deliver research of benefit to your nominated end-user(s).</p> <p><b>Stream 3. Strategic partnerships</b></p> <p>You should clearly establish that the research proposed directly addresses key questions or needs of national interest reflected in funding of the national program.</p> <p>Provide a clear link to the objectives of the partnering national program that reflect the national priorities for which it was funded, such that a reviewer can see easily that the research will fill one or more important information gaps of national interest.</p> <p>You must also provide clear, realistic (not aspirational) and appropriate objectives that address the funded program objectives - not just for the research outputs, but for your application and uptake by the end-users for whom the identified national priorities are important (e.g., the partnering program, or their funding agencies).</p> <p><b>Stream 4. Technology and innovation</b></p> <p>You should clearly establish that the research proposed will provide new insights for technology development or innovation or field-test recent technology innovations.</p> <p>Identify the end-users of the technology and the application(s) for which the technology is being developed, whether in research, industry, government, or production sectors and clearly explain why the research is important to fill a technology gap or opportunity or resolve a technology deficiency.</p> <p>You need to establish that the technology improvement or innovation will be in Australia's national interest, for example through improved research, monitoring, or management capability or efficiency, industry development or application, or international standing.</p> <p>You must also provide clear, realistic (not aspirational) and appropriate objectives that will deliver research of practical benefit to your nominated end-user(s).</p> <p><b>Streams 1-4</b></p> <p>Streams 1-4 can demonstrate national benefit. There is no weighting on streams when being assessed by National Interest and User Needs.</p> <p>Where partnership and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities is part of your proposal, this needs early consideration. You need to demonstrate you have co-conceived and co-designed the project with traditional owners, that your engagement is genuine, and that you are considering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities in relation to your research well beyond the voyage.</p> <p><b>Stream 5. User-funded research</b></p> <p>If you are interested in accessing sea time under Stream 5, please reach out to <a href="mailto:MNf@csiro.au">MNf@csiro.au</a> before applying.</p>	<p><b>RB 1 National Interest and User Needs</b></p> <p><b>Provide context for the project in terms of national interest and user needs.</b></p> <p>In answering this question, you must also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline what is the national interest in this project and how your research aligns with those interests.</li> <li>• Explain who are the next- and end-users, what their need is.</li> <li>• Describe how the project has been co-conceived with next- and/or end-users, and its alignment with their needs.</li> <li>• Describe how you have partnered and engaged with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>RB 1: Is it clear that the project objectives meet the research needs of Stream end-users and is in Australia’s national interest?</b></p> <p><b>Unsupportable:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project not justified with reference to end-user needs or national interests. Project objectives will not address national interests or end-user needs; no evidence of end-user input or support.</li> </ul> <p><b>Poor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National or end-user need for research articulated vaguely. Relevance of project objectives only indirectly or vaguely relevant to national interests or end-user needs for research and end-user support for project unclear.</li> </ul> <p><b>Adequate-Good:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End-user or national needs for research reasonably clear and project objectives credibly justified by reference to those needs. Project objectives credibly- to well-justified by reference to articulated end-user needs or national interests, including some evidence of engagement with, and support from, end-users.</li> </ul> <p><b>Strong:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear articulation of end-user needs for research and its national interest, demonstrating a sound understanding of how the research will address those needs. Robust, documented justification that project objectives will address identified end-user needs and national interests, with sound evidence of co-conception with and support from end-users.</li> </ul> <p><b>Compelling:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In depth understanding of end-users needs and very strong justification that the research is in the national interest. Very strong justification that project objectives are framed specifically to deliver important end-user needs and is in the national interest, with a compelling case, co-conceived, co-designed and supported by end-users, that the objectives specifically address key end-user needs of national interest.</li> </ul>



## RB 2. Design

### Stream 1. Policy-driven research

Describe how your research aligns with your identified next and/or end-users' priorities and how they have been involved in co-designing your proposal, including its proposed outputs and their delivery.

You should discuss your proposed outputs with Stream 1 end-users during preparation of your application and preferably provide supporting statements from them that demonstrate that they see the outputs as essential and have significant potential for adoption. You should also discuss end-users' needs and constraints and indicate how these have been factored into your delivery plan.

We want to know you have co-conceived and co-designed the project with next-and/or end-users before you started your application. Describe and articulate how your research will benefit next- and/or end-users and the nation. Ensure your collaborative engagement and communication is end-to-end.

### Stream 2. Discipline-driven research

Describe expected outputs for end-users that are explicitly aligned to those end-user identified needs.

You should also describe your plan for delivery of research to your nominated end-user(s).

End-users of Stream 2 research might include other researchers who will apply your results to national or international research initiatives, such as improving models of climate, the ocean, biodiversity or contributing to global research activities. Outputs might include research publications but desirably would include products that specifically fit end-users needs.

You should explain how your results will be conveyed in ways that enable their application to other fields, models, etc.

You should discuss outputs with expected end-users (including other researchers) and preferably provide supporting statements that demonstrate your proposed outputs are seen as valuable, accessible, and relevant to those end-users.

### Stream 3. Strategic partnerships

As a prospective partner, you should describe expected outputs for use by the partnering, or other, end-users that are explicitly being targeted for adoption and application to meet the funded program objectives. You should also provide a clear plan for the delivery of proposed partnership outputs and a delivery timeline.

Outputs might include research reports or publications but in Stream 3 will need to include more specific products that fit with the partner's operational needs.

Strategic partnership leaders should discuss these outputs with the partner end-users during application preparation and provide supporting statements from the partner that demonstrate that the outputs are central to addressing the needs for which they were publicly funded.

### Stream 4. Technology and innovation

You should describe expected outputs for delivery to end-users that are explicitly targeted at technology applications for use in Australia's interests.

You need to describe your plan for delivery of your technology or innovation research to your nominated end-user(s) and a realistic delivery timeline. You should describe how this fits into the general plan for making the technology accessible.

Stream 4 outputs might include research reports but also likely will need to include more specific products for technology transfer, such as design and operation details, patents, or capability development materials or training.

You should discuss expected outputs with expected end-users during application preparation and provide supporting statements from end-users that demonstrate your outputs are seen as fit-for-purpose and readily applicable to further development or adoption of the new or enhanced technologies.

### RB 2 Design

**Describe how the project and its benefits have been co-designed with next-and/or end-users (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities where appropriate) and how project outputs match or meet their needs.**

In answering this question, you must also:

- Describe the co-design process that has been undertaken with next- and/or end-users.
- Outline whether there is co-investment from next- and/or end-users.
- Describe how and when the intended benefits will be delivered to next- and/or end-users.
- Outline whether resources are adequate to deliver the intended benefits to meet the delivery timeline.

**RB 2: Is there evidence that the project and its benefits have been co-designed with next- and/or end-users, as appropriate for the stream, including relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities? Are the proposed project outputs well matched to articulated national interest or end-user expectations from research?**

#### Unsupportable:

- No evidence that the project and its benefits have been co-designed with next- and/or end-users or that project outputs match or meet their needs.

#### Poor:

- Limited evidence that the project and its benefits have been co-designed with next- and/or end-users and that project outputs match or meet their needs. Response is poorly framed, lacks credibility, needs refinement or clarification.

#### Adequate-Good:

- Reasonably articulated evidence that the project and its benefits have been co-designed with next- and/or end-users and that project outputs match or meet their needs. Response is reasonably clear but with some limitations.

#### Strong:

- Well-articulated evidence that the project and its benefits have been co-designed with next- and/or end-users and that project outputs match or meet their needs. Response is clear, specific, well justified and realistic.

#### Compelling:

- Robust and thorough evidence that the project and its benefits have been co-designed with next- and/or end-users and that project outputs match or meet their needs. Evidence for user need and co-design is demonstrated unequivocally by detailed supporting documentation.

**Streams 1-4**

Where partnership and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities is part of your proposal, this needs early consideration. You need to demonstrate you have co-conceived and co-designed the project with traditional owners, that your engagement is genuine, and that you are considering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities in relation to your research well beyond the voyage.

**Stream 5. User-funded research**

If you are interested in accessing sea time under Stream 5, please reach out to [MNf@csiro.au](mailto:MNf@csiro.au) before applying.

## RB 3. Delivery

### Stream 1. Policy-driven research

You should clearly lay-out a strong plan for engaging with the Stream's nominated end-user, being clear about the mechanisms and timetable by which you propose to engage with them and how they plan to evaluate the success and impact of the research proposed.

You should provide convincing evidence that your delivery strategy is endorsed by your targeted end-user. This should be in the form of supporting documentation, including letters of support from your nominated end-user in which they:

- specify the path to adoption of the project outputs
- attest that the research and planned outputs are essential to their business or area of responsibility; and
- express confidence in your ability to deliver the expected outputs of benefit.

Your research should align with national interests, be likely to deliver upon national needs, have a path to impact, the right team, adequate resources identified and a clear timeline to deliver benefit to justify investment of MNF resources.

### Stream 2. Discipline-driven research

You should clearly lay-out a plan for delivering the knowledge targeted at nominated end-users, being clear about the mechanisms and timetable by which they will be engaged.

Provide convincing evidence that your delivery strategy is likely to align with end-user needs.

Your case for benefit will be helped considerably by supporting documentation, including letters of support from end users, including other researchers where relevant, in which they:

- Attest that the new knowledge delivered will be useful to them; and
- Express confidence in the ability of the project team to deliver the expected outputs.

You should also detail how you plan to evaluate the success and impact of the research proposed.

### Stream 3. Strategic partnerships

You should lay out a clear plan by which the partner end-user intends to apply/use the project outputs, including the mechanisms and timetable by which those outputs will be provided for use. Supply convincing evidence that your proposed outputs and delivery strategy are endorsed by the partner end-user. You should aim to provide high levels of supporting documentation, including letters of support from the partner in which they:

- specify the path to application of the proposed research;
- attest that the research proposed is essential to the purpose for which they were funded;
- express confidence in the project team's ability to deliver the expected outputs of benefit; and
- outline any proposed co-investment by the partner(s).

### Stream 4. Technology and innovation

You should clearly lay-out a plan for delivering the technology innovations to your nominated end-users, being clear about the mechanisms and timetable for engagement to transfer technological information or products. Provide convincing evidence that your delivery strategy is endorsed by targeted end-users and aligns with their operational needs. You should aim to provide high levels of supporting documentation, including letters of support from end users in which they:

- Attest that the technology or innovation proposed addresses an important gap or deficiency;
- Specify how they will apply or adopt the results of your research; and
- Express confidence in the project team's ability to deliver the expected outputs in ways that will be useful to them.

### Stream 5. User-funded research

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### RB 3 Delivery

**Describe key engagement activities for promoting and assisting adoption of project outputs.**

In answering this question, you must also:

- Describe how next- and/or end-users will be engaged and assist in project delivery.
- Explain what the plan is for project outputs to be promoted and adopted by next- and/or end-users.
- Describe the commitments from next- and/or end-users to effect change in the relevant operational domain.

**RB 3: Is there a clear plan for how next- and/or end-users will be engaged in and assist with project delivery, how project outputs will be promoted and adopted by next- and/or end-users and their commitments to effecting change in the relevant operational domain?**

#### Unsupportable:

- No key engagement activities planned for project delivery or promoting and assisting the adoption of project outputs and not at all clear how next- and/or end-users outputs are committed to effect change in the relevant operational domain.

#### Poor:

- Vague or cursory reference to engagement activities planned for project delivery or promoting and assisting the adoption of project outputs and unclear how next- and/or end-users outputs are committed to adopt or effect change in the relevant operational domain.

#### Adequate-Good:

- Reasonably clear articulation of key engagement activities planned for project delivery or promoting and assisting the adoption of project outputs and sufficient description of how next- and/or end-users outputs are committed to effect change in the relevant operational domain.

#### Strong:

- Detailed articulation of key engagement activities planned for project delivery or promoting and assisting the adoption of project outputs and clear how next- and/or end-users outputs are committed to effect change in the relevant operational domain.

#### Compelling:

- Compelling, clear, convincing articulation of key engagement activities planned for project delivery or promoting and assisting the adoption of project outputs and strongly substantiated how next- and/or end-users outputs are committed to adopt or effect change in the relevant operational domain.

## RB 4. Impact

### Stream 1. Policy-driven research

Clearly explain both the significance of the research you are proposing in the context of your field(s) as well as its wider and intended impact on broader society. We want to understand what you propose to do, and how the proposed outputs and outreach will deliver the expected impact. You may like to put this in the format of a table, e.g. as a pathway to impact or a theory of change.

Looking to the next generation, clearly demonstrate how the younger scientists (graduates and early career researchers) are going to explicitly benefit from the voyage experience, what their learning opportunities will be, both in the science itself and in the planning and conduct of the research.

Provide evidence to demonstrate that the team proposed includes people with a track-record of effective engagement with policy end-users, including such things as;

- Strong evidence of previous translation of scientific results into outputs that had demonstrable utility in the policy arena; and
- Supporting testimonials from previous research end- users with whom members of your team have worked.

Training and capacity building should show evidence of strong consideration of how you will deliver against it and what outputs and impacts that might flow as a result. Aspirational statements that don't demonstrate any real plan for delivery are likely to weaken your application.

### Stream 2. Discipline-driven research and Stream 3. Strategic partnerships

As applicable to your Stream, clearly explain both the significance of the research you are proposing in the context of your field(s) as well as its wider and intended impact on broader society. We want to understand what you propose to do, and how the proposed outputs and outreach will deliver the expected impact. You may like to put this in the format of a table, e.g. as a pathway to impact or a theory of change.

Looking to the next generation, clearly demonstrate how the younger scientists (graduates and early career researchers) are going to explicitly benefit from the voyage experience, what their learning opportunities will be, both in the science itself and in the planning and conduct of the research.

Provide evidence to demonstrate that the team proposed includes people with a track-record of effective engagement with end-users, including researchers in other disciplines if relevant, including such things as;

- Strong evidence of previous translation of scientific results into outputs that had demonstrable utility to others; and
- Supporting testimonials from previous research end-users with whom members of your team have worked.

Training and capacity building should show evidence of strong consideration of how you will deliver against it and what outputs and impacts that might flow as a result. Aspirational statements that don't demonstrate any real plan for delivery are likely to weaken your application. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation and involvement in your proposal would be well regarded.

### Stream 4. Technology and innovation

Clearly explain both the significance of the research you are proposing in the context of your field(s) as well as the wider and intended value for broader society. We want to understand what you propose to do, and how the proposed outputs and outreach will deliver the expected impact. You may like to put this in the format of a table, e.g. as a pathway to adoption or impact.

Provide evidence to demonstrate that the team proposed includes people with a track-record of effective engagement with end-users, including such things as;

- Strong evidence of previous application of new technologies or transfer of technologies to end-users; and

### RB 4 Impact

**Describe what success looks like and how it will be evaluated, the project team's capability to deliver benefits, and outline the education, training and capacity building opportunities. Explain how these contribute to the research objectives and how they align with national interests and user needs.**

Note: Capabilities will be assessed relative to opportunity.

In answering this question, you must also:

- Describe what success looks like and how project outputs and intended benefits will be assessed and evaluated.
- Describe the project team's capabilities and capacity to successfully deliver the project outcomes and intended benefits. Provide evidence (e.g. through publications, products, testimonials) that the research team has the capabilities and capacity to engage effectively with next- and/or end-users to deliver benefit (applicable to Early Career Researchers) or previously delivered outputs of demonstrable utility to next-and/or end-users in appropriate forms (applicable to senior researchers).
- Describe education, training and/or capacity building activities included in the project, at sea, prior and post voyage and their linkage to the research objectives and field work plan.
- Explain how the research training and education opportunities of the project align with and deliver national priorities, next- and/or end-user needs and/or the wider marine community.

Note: Ensure your answers remain focussed on capacity to deliver benefit.

Information relating to research capability should be included in answers to RQ4 Post-voyage Activities and Impact.

Note: See next section for more information on education, training and communication.

**RB 4: Is it clear what success looks like and how it will be evaluated? Is there a clear the pathway to impact or a theory of change? Does the project team include people with the capability to deliver benefits? Does the project include specific education, training and capacity building opportunities that will advance national capabilities relevant to the nominated MNF Stream?**

#### Unsupportable:

- No description of what success looks like and how it will be evaluated. No evidence presented of the project team's capabilities and capacity to successfully deliver the project outcomes and intended benefits. The project team has not articulated education, training and capacity building opportunities and does not articulate education, training and capacity building activities relevant to research objectives, national interests and stream priorities.

#### Poor:

- Indicative but non-specific assertions of what success looks like and how it will be evaluated. Unclear evidence presented of the project team's capabilities and capacity to successfully deliver the project outcomes and intended benefits. The project team presents only a vague plan for education, training and capacity building opportunities and fails to demonstrate how planned education, training and capacity building activities are relevant to research objectives, national interests and stream priorities.

#### Adequate-Good:

- Moderate to solid evidence of what success looks like and how it will be evaluated. Adequate evidence presented of the project team's capabilities and capacity to successfully deliver the project outcomes and intended benefits. The project team articulates a basic-moderate plan for education, training and capacity building opportunities and education, training and capacity building activities are moderately relevant to research objectives, national interests and stream priorities.

#### Strong:

- Clearly stated evidence of what success looks like and how it will be evaluated. Strong evidence presented of the project team's capabilities and capacity to successfully deliver the project outcomes and intended benefits. The project team provides a detailed plan for education, training and capacity building opportunities and education, training and capacity building activities are clearly linked to research objectives, national interests and stream priorities.

#### Compelling:

- Outstanding and well-documented evidence of what success looks like and how it will be evaluated. Compelling and clear evidence presented of the project team's capabilities and capacity to successfully deliver the project outcomes and intended benefits. The project team provides an outstanding plan for education, training and capacity building opportunities that will provide conspicuous benefits for the stream priorities and strengthen national capabilities.

- Supporting testimonials from end-users with whom team members have worked before to implement new technologies.

Training and capacity building should show evidence of strong consideration of how you will deliver against it and what outputs and impacts that might flow as a result. Aspirational statements that don't demonstrate any real plan for delivery are likely to weaken your application. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation and involvement in your proposal would be well regarded.

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